1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

impaired than their fear-born veneration evaporated, and their native antipathy reappeared in original virulence. The 1894 party was fortunate in successfully treating a sick wife of sub-chief Mashém, and subsequently spent days in the rancheria, distributing gifts to old and young in a manner unprecedented in their experience and making liberal exchanges for such small possessions as they wished to spare; yet, with a single possible exception, they succeeded in bringing no more human expression to any Seri face or eye than curiosity, avidity for food, studied indifference, and shrouded or snarling disgust. Among themselves they were fairly cheerful, and the families were unobtrusively affectionate; yet the cheerfulness was always chilled and often banished by the approach of an alien. The Sonorenses generally hold the Seri in indescribably deep dread as uncanny and savage monsters lying beyond the human pale; while the reciprocal feeling on the part of the Seri toward Caucasians, and still more toward Indian aliens, seems akin to that of the average man toward the rattlesnake, which he flees or slays without pause for thought—it seems nothing less than intuitive and involuntary loathing. The Seri antipathy is at once deepened into an obsession and crystallized into a cult; the highest virtue in their calendar is the shedding of alien blood; and their normal impulse on meeting an alien is to kill unless deterred by fear, to flee if the way is clear, and to fawn treacherously for better opportunity if neither natural course lies open.

Concordantly with their primary characteristic, the Seri have avoided ethnic and demotic union beyond the narrow limits of their own kindred; and even of these they seem to have cast out parts, annihilating the Guayma and Upanguayma, displacing and nearly destroying the Tepoka, and outlawing individuals and (apparently) small groups. The earlier chronicles indicate that the Jesuit missionaries, and after them the Franciscan friars and the secular officials, sought to scatter the tribe by both cajolery and coercion, and endeavored to divide families by restraint of women and children and by banishment of wives; there are loose traditions, too, of the capture and enslavement of Indian and Caucasian women in Seriland; yet the great fact remains that not a single mixed-blood Seri is known to exist, and that no more than two of the blood (Kolusio and perhaps one other) now live voluntarily beyond the territorial and consanguineal confines of the tribe. The romantic story of a white slave and ancestress of a Seri clan, sometimes diffused through pernicious reportorial activity, is without shadow of proof or probability; the tradition of the captivity of a Papago belle was corroborated, albeit indefinitely, by Mashém's naive admission that an alien women was once kept as a slave to a childless death due to her inaptitude for long wanderings; and there is not a single known fact indicating even so much as miscibility of the Seri blood with that of other varieties of the genus *Homo*. Naturally the presumption of miscibility holds in the absence of direct evidence; yet the presumption

1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

is at least partially countervailed by conspicuous biotic characters, such as color, stature, etc., so distinctive as almost to seem specific: the Seri are distinctively dark-skinned, their extreme color-range (so far as known) being less than their nearest approach to any neighboring tribe; they are nearly as distinctive in stature, the difference between their tallest and shortest normal adults being apparently less than that between their shortest and the tallest of the neighboring Papago—though they are not so far from the more variable and often tall Yaqui; and they appear to be no less distinctive in such physiologic processes as those connected with their extraordinary food habits. Still more distinctive are the demotic characters connected with their habits of life and modes of thought; and when the sum of biotic and demotic characters is taken, the Seri are found to be set apart from all neighboring Sonoran tribes by differences much more striking than the individual range among themselves.[1]

It is especially noteworthy that the Seri have held aloof from that communality of the deserts which has brought so many tribes into union with each other and with their animal and vegetal neighbors through common strife against the common enemies of sun and sand—the communality expressed in the distribution of vital colonies over arid plains, in the toleration and domestication of animals, in the development of agriculture, and eventually in the shaping of a comprehensive solidarity, with the intelligence of the highest organism as the controlling factor.[2] Dwelling on a singularly prolific shore, the Seri never learned the hard lesson of desert solidarity, but looked on the land merely as a place of lodgment or concealment, or as a source of luxuries such as cactus tunas, mesquite beans, and tasty game; they never formed the first idea of planting or cultivating, and their only notion of harvesting and storing against time of need was the intolerably filthy one of nature's simplest teaching; they apparently never grasped the concept of cooperation with animals, and came to tolerate the parasitical coyote only in that its persistence was greater than their own, and in so far as it was stealthy enough to hide its travail and the suckling of its young against their ravening maws; and they apparently never rose to real recognition of their own kind in alien forms, but set their hands against agricultural and zoöcultural humans as peculiarly potent and hence especially obnoxious animals. Naturally their racial intolerance was seed of battle and blood-feud; and they would doubtless have melted away under the general antagonism but for the natural barriers and unlimited food of their restricted domain.

At present, as for the later and best-known decades of their history,

[1] It seems probable that the Seri were nearer to tribes of southern Baja California than to those of Sonora at the time of the earliest explorations, yet that the distinction was sufficiently strong to warrant the extension of the proposition to these tribes also.

[2] The Beginning of Agriculture, American Anthropologist, vol. VIII, 1895, p. 350. The Beginning of Zoöculture, ibid., vol. X, 1897, p. 295.

I: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

ably authentic cranium of the entire skeleton with two skulls preserved in the American Museum of Natural History, viz, No. 99/84, designated as a skull of a Tiburon mound-builder, and No. 99/85, labeled as having

128
141

the complete skeleton. Subsequently this specimen also was put in Dr Rollfink's hands (at his request), and was kindly examined, with the results recorded in the following letter:

MARCH 29, 1895.

Professor W J McGee,
Bureau of American Ethnology, Washington, D. C.

DEAR SIR: The skull which you submitted to me for examination shows the following:

The skull is that of a male between 40 and 50 years of age. The facial parts and a portion of the left temporal bone are wanting; otherwise the specimen shows nothing pathologic. There are signs that the skull belonged to a very muscular individual. The occipital depressions, ridges, and protuberances are very marked, and the temporal ridges approach to within 1.7 cm. on the left and 2.3 cm. on the right of the sagittal suture. The whole skull is rather heavy and massive; thickness of parietal bones 4-5 mm.

The shape of the skull is unusual. The frontal region is rather broad (frontal diameter, minimum, 9.7; frontal diameter, maximum, 12.1 cm.), but quite flat and sloping. Frontal ridges wanting (broken away).

The sagittal region is elevated into a crest which begins 4 cm. posteriorly from the bregma, is most marked at the vertex, and proceeds in two tapering diverging crests to the lambdoid suture. The whole vertex region is considerably elevated and forms a blunt cone, which is particularly noticeable when the skull is viewed from the side.

The temporo-parietal regions are moderately convex and expanded anteriorly, but become flattened and gradually narrow toward the parietal bosses. The parietal bones measure each 11 cm. along the coronal, but only 8.0 cm. along the lambdoid suture. The gradual tapering of the parietal regions from their middle backward continues on the occipital bone up to the inion, and gives the norma verticalis of the skull a peculiar appearance.

The occipital region, as a whole, does not protrude much, as in true dolichocephals, but it shows a prominent broad crest, formed by the two superior semicircular lines and the region between them. The extreme occipital protuberance is pronounced and shows signs of strong nuchæ attachments. A small distance above the foramen magnum, on each side of the median line, is a very marked depression, surmounted by a small ridge.

Of the mastoids, the right has been broken off and the left is damaged, but they do not seem to have been of extraordinary size.

The base of the skull is fairly well preserved and shows the following characters: The basilar process and the petrous portions of the temporal bones are more massive than usual. The glenoid fossæ are broad and of fair depth. The styloids are quite ~~No~~ rudimentary (right 0.7, left 0.8 cm. long). The foramen magnum is hexagonal in outline; it is 4.4 cm. long, 3.4 cm. wide; its plane is inclined backwards in such a way that its antero-posterior diameter prolonged would touch about the lower borders of the nasal aperture.

The cranial cavity can be well inspected through the opening caused by injury. The internal surface of the frontal bone shows but very few traces of brain impressions. There are several large impressions on each parietal bone, and deep, though rather small, fossæ for the extremities of the occipital lobes on the occipital bone. The superior border of the foramen ovale shows in the middle a rounded notch about 3 mm. deep.

The dentition of the anterior is throughout very simple.

Measures.—The glabello-occipital length and maximum width of the skull can not be accurately determined on account of injuries to the bones. They amount, respectively, to about 18.8 and 14 cm., giving the cephalic index of about 74.4 (moderate dolichocephaly). The basion-bregma height is 14.1 cm.; basion-vertex, 14.6 cm.; basion-obelion, 13.9 cm.; basion-lambda, 12.5 cm. The two more anterior of these measures characterize the skull as a rather high one. The two more posterior measures show the rapid downward slope of the posterior half of the sagittal region. The maximum circumference of the skull (above the ridges) is 51 cm.

The bregma-lambda arc measures 13.3, the lambda-opisthion arc 11.2 cm. Plan view between the asterions = 10.7 cm.

If the skull under examination is considered from a purely evolutionary standpoint, it must be pronounced to be in many points inferior to the average white and even to the majority of Indian crania. An anthropological identification of the specimen is difficult, for the reason that we are still very imperfectly acquainted with the craniology of the peoples of southwestern United States and northern Mexico. From what we know of the crania of the Pima, and the extinct Santa Barbara, Santa Catalina, etc, Californians, it is possible to say that the individual whose skull is here reported upon may have belonged to a people physically related to either of these groups. The skull is very distinct from that of an Apache. The female Seri cranium examined by me is here shown and shows certain of the peculiarities of this specimen; nevertheless it is very possible that both crania belonged to individuals of the same tribe.

ALES HRDLIČKA.

I: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Ser: NU31

Manual of the Peculiarities of the Skeleton

The nerve and blood-vessel foramina are generally large. This character and the platycnemic tibiæ indicate an ample musculature of the subject.

The height is above the general average for a woman, which, according to Topinard, is 1.53.

The extra-basilar foramen are large and visibly pervious. This condition is found occasionally; significance doubtful; it is more frequent in young subjects.

Platycnemic tibiæ—This is considered a simian character.[1] It was found first by Broca in 1868[2] on bones from Eyzies; it is associated with relative strength of the muscles of the leg; is very frequent among the characters found on bones from the epoch of polished stone in Europe.[3] J. Wyman found this character more accentuated than at Cro-Magnon or at Gibraltar on a third of the tibiæ from the mounds of the United States.[4]

Perforated humerus—Noticed first by Demoulins, 1828, on the humeri of Guanches and Hottentots;[5] occurs with greatest frequency in the following peoples:[6]

	Per cent.
156 neolithic humeri from around Paris	21.6
97 humeri of African negroes	21.7
122 humeri of Guanches	25.4
80 humeri from the mounds of United States (J. Wyman)	31.2
32 humeri of Polynesians	34.3
30 humeri of altaic and American races	36.7

Summarily, Dr Hrdlička's special determinations conform with the external observations on the Seri body; they indicate an exceptionally large stature, together with a notably well-developed and well-proportioned osseous framework, of the native American type, yet significantly approaching the Caucasian in several respects. It is especially noteworthy that the cranium is well formed and capacious, the precise measurements corroborating the external observation that the Seri head is of good absolute size, though relatively smaller (in comparison with height and weight) than that of some neighboring tribes of less stature—e. g., the Papago. It may be noted, too, that the imperfect ankylosis of the epiphyses, and various other skeletal features, are in accord with the inferences from the living body as to the slowness of attaining maturity. It may be noted further that the extraordinary development of the muscular attachments, especially in the masculine cranium, is quite in harmony with the habits of the tribe.

The remaining somatic characteristics of the Seri are for the greater part of such sort as to be described by generalities and negatives. In general they correspond with those of typical American tribesmen and other peoples; and they do not exhibit striking peculiarities in proportion or structure. In the opposability of the thumb, the nonopposability of the hallux, and the independence of fingers and toes, the Seri hands and feet are developed quite up to, if not somewhat beyond, the

[1] Hervé-Lequeu et Hervé, Précis d'Anthropologie, 1897, pp. 112, 2027.
[2] Bulletin de la Société d'Anthropologie, 1868.
[3] Hervé-Lequeu et Hervé, op. cit., p. 112.
[4] Histoire Naturelle des Races Humaines, 1869, p. 264.
[5] Hervé-Lequeu et Hervé, op. cit., p. 292.

1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

142 Amerindian[1] average; the feet are set straight in walking, as befits the pedestrian habit; the arms are not elongated, and the thighs seem no
●[144] longer in proportion to other elements of the stature than are those of the highest human types. In like manner the bodies are notably free from artificial deformation; the skulls are not flattened or otherwise
[304] distorted; there is no scarification, or even tattooing; neither ears nor lips are pierced for pendants or labrets; the teeth are not filed or drilled, though in some cases at least the first incisors of females are extracted; and while there are trustworthy records of the piercing of the nasal septum for the insertion of pendants, no examples were found at Costa Rica in 1894. The food habits and other customs of the tribe indicate, or at least suggest, more or less specialized and perhaps distinctive internal characters; but, without actual examination of the organs, these inferred characters demand little more than passing notice.

On reviewing the more prominent somatic characters of the Seri, it is found that the greater number are either functional or presumptively correlated with function, and that only a few—chiefly stature and color—are simply structural; accordingly a comparison of the peculiar somatic features and the peculiar individual habits of the tribe would seem to be instructive in more than ordinary degree.

The most striking trait of the Seri is the pedestrian habit. The
361 warriors and women and children alike are habitual rovers; their jacales and even their largest rancherias are only temporary domiciles, evidently vacant oftener than occupied; the principal rancherias are separated by a hard day's journey or more; and none of the known
[312] rancherias or jacales of more persistent use are nearer than 4 to 10 miles from the fresh water by which their occupants are supplied. Probably the most persistently occupied rancherias of the last half century have been those located from time to time near Costa Rica, yet even these were seldom occupied by the same group for more than a fortnight or possibly a month, and were often vacated within a day or two after erection. Still more temporary camps intervene between jacales, and their sites may be seen in numbers in the neighborhood of the better-beaten paths, or along the shores, or even over the trackless spall-strewn plains; they may be merely trampled spots, sparsely strewn with oyster shells and large bones gnawed at the ends, usually in the lee of a shrub or rock; in places of small shrubbery or exceptionally abundant grass there may be two or three or perhaps half a dozen "forms" (suggesting the temporary resting places of rabbits), in which robust bodies nestled and shrugged themselves into the warm earth and under the meager vegetation. Rarely there are ashes and cinders hard by, to mark the site of a tiny fire, and more frequently battered and stained or greasy bowlders record their own use as meat-

[1] The term *Amerind* (with the self-explanatory variations *Amerindian*, *Amerindic*, etc.) has been established by the Anthropological Society of Washington as a convenient collective designation for the aboriginal American tribes (American Anthropologist, new series, vol. I, 1899, p. 562).

1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

147 182 To the actual observer of the Seri in his prime there is an indefinable but none the less impressive harmony between the intense regimen and the trenchant structural development characteristic of the tribe—a harmony like unto that felt by naturalist and artist alike in viewing at once the clean-cut form and vigorously easy mobility of tiger or thoroughbred horse; and simple inspection of the lithe limbs and body-muscles stirs into living realization a half-felt inference from many facts—the obvious and indubitable inference that they are stress-shaped structures. Accordingly, the concentrated and robust bodies, the shapely jaws, the well-chiseled arms, and the statuesque legs of the Seri, no less than their powerful hands and bulky feet, direct special attention to the axiom that somatic structures are the product of exercise, and indicate with convincing clearness that the structures are trenchantly developed because of the supreme intensity of the creative exercise. It may be impracticable to outline in terms of metabolism the precise processes of waste and repair in organs and organisms, or to define the relative periods of action and assimilation (or of catabolism and anabolism) best adapted to the development of motile tissue; yet the external facts of all bodily growth demonstrate the efficiency of alternating effort and repose, while the characteristics of highly developed animal bodies (including those of the Seri) demonstrate that the most beneficial exercise is that of relatively brief but intense stresses alternating with relatively long intervals of sluggish movement or complete repose. Moreover, the facile metabolism involved in the widely alternating regimen implies exceptional somatic plasticity of the sort normally accompanying youth and attending tissue growth; and this persistent bodily plasticity is in harmony with the peculiarly dilatory maturation characteristic of the Seri tribe. So the animal-like bodies of the Seri, no less than their animal-like movements, which at first sight suggest primitive condition, may safely be held in large measure to reflect specific habits of life, themselves reflecting a distinctive habitat.

144 186 Still more suggestive to the observer than the well-molded structures and the intense functioning with which they are conjoined are those elusive yet persistent characteristics of the Seri comprised in their distinctive race sense—characteristics ranging from overweening intratribal pride to overpowering extratribal hatred. Even at first blush it would seem obvious that the tribal isolation, itself the reflection of environment, would necessarily tend toward a segregative habit with concomitant hostility toward aliens; yet the race-sense of the Seri so far transcends that of other segregated tribes as to suggest the existence of a specific cause. So, too, it would seem obvious that the race feeling gathers about a corporeal nucleus in the form of the race-type exemplified in the heroic stature, the shapely face, the mighty chest, the luxuriant hair, the well-modeled muscles, the powerful feet and hands, the "collected" carriage, and the stored vitality, which (as already indicated) synthesize the environmental interactions of generations; yet the actual student can not avoid the impression that the

1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

race-sense dominates the race-type—that the Seri are farther away from neighboring tribes in feeling than in features, in function than in structure, in mind than in body. Now, in seeking the sources of this distinctive (not to say specific) race-sense, several suggestions arise. Naturally the first suggestion is that of simple sexual selection, the (assumptive) analogue of an important factor in biotic evolution; but the suggestion is at once apparently negatived by the fact that all the mature men and women are married and have families of children proportionate to their ages. True, undesirable fiancés may be expelled from the tribe, or even executed (as intimated by neighboring Sonorenses); yet there is little evidence that either method of selection is employed among the Seri more largely than among other peoples; and, as all recent researches indicate, the higher peoples at least have risen above the plane of sexual selection per se as an effective factor in somatic development. A second suggestion arises in the axiom (vivified by realization of the connection between Seri movements and Seri structures) that perfected organs are the product of stressful functioning—indeed, the suggestion is but the extension of the axiom from the individual to the stirp and the group. In developing the suggestion it is convenient to divide the career of the stirp into periods defined by the successive wax and wane of vitality in its most significant manifestations; and this may be done in terms of successive individual lifetimes in their three successive aspects of (1) youth, (2) maturity, and (3) senility, in which the dominant constructive functions are respectively (1) somatic growth, (2) collective growth (comprising both procreation and the accumulation of artificial possessions), and (3) dissipation of somatic vitality and distribution of extrasomatic accumulations (generational as well as material and intellectual). Now, it is a commonplace in every stage of culture that vital capacity, and also the inherent sense of kind manifested in pairing, culminate in the medial portion, or prime, of individual life; and if this universal recognition is valid, it is just to hold that the career of the stirp is defined by the successive vital climaxes expressing the primes of the series of generations pertaining to the stirp. It follows that each generation must represent, not the average qualities of the entire generation past, but the qualities of the most virile and muliebrile fraction of that generation; whence it follows in turn that in general the generations must develop along the lines most prominent in the lives of each people in their prime. The process may be formulated as the *law of periodic conjugation*, under which successive generations are initiated, not at random, but at periods of culminant effectiveness in shaping the course of the stirp. The immediate application of this law to the Seri tribe is manifest, for it explains (the initial condition of isolation and the consequent incipient segregative habit being given) how and why the tribal standards have grown more definite from generation to generation, and have interacted cumulatively with the distinctive environment in such manner as continually to widen the chasm between the desert-

2: Kroeber E-5 (1930)1931 NU31 Seri NU31

Society

583 Marriage is monogamous. The wife is bought, in spite of the
[595] poverty of the Seri. Santa Blanco paid 150 pesos in property for his wife. Chico Romero, a widower, paid more for his, a widow, "because she had three daughters, and a family with daughters is rich" (in expectation of bride prices).

591 The wife goes to live with the husband. A young couple lives
562 with the young man's parents, perhaps in an annex to the house. "The man commands." Chico was emphatic on this point, and repeated that when his son married he would live with him, not with the girl's relatives. Both he and Santo have step-sons-in-law as well as daughters-in-law living with them, but this is because they are chief and boat-owner respectively; (and the sons-in-law are young).

833 Copulation was said to take place immediately on marriage.
McGee's statement of a period of continence being cited as the custom of a foreign tribe, the informant obviously wondered and laughed.
[843] Intercourse goes on during pregnancy; but not for some months after birth, for fear of a new pregnancy, which would be injurious to the child. A good man respects his wife at all times and does not constantly pursue her.

144 No half-breeds were seen, and the Seri declare they are free of
164 venereal disease.

551 Nothing could be elicited from the informant as to anything like
614 the group-inherited names of lineages, or clans, of the Yuman tribes.

768 When a woman dies, the widower may give the children to his dead wife's parents to raise. This is the only item learned that might point to McGee's "matriarchate"; but the informant may have been thinking of particular cases. His son lives with him, though he lost the boy's mother.

582 Cross-cousin marriage is as prohibited as that of parallel cousins. This is in accord with the sibling terminology for all cousins; but in view of the present small number of the tribe, the rule must work difficulty.

[587] A man does not marry his dead wife's sister. Apparently he may not. Nor is there levirate. The informant volunteered the question if marriage with step-daughters was permitted by other peoples. Being told of the Navaho custom, he seemed shocked.

606 Neither husband nor wife looks at or addresses either parent-
183 in-law. In the isolated, small-group life of the Seri, this rule can hardly be adhered to with complete rigor, and its conspicuous carrying out was not observed; but then everything in their behavior is casual, informal, and slovenly.

607 The kinship system as recorded contains a note as to a woman not addressing her younger sister's husband by kinship term except